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COOPERATION AND COORDINATION OF ACTIVITIES WITH OTHER INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS AND INSTITUTIONS AND SUBREGIONAL GROUPINGS

Note by the Executive Secretary

1. Since its forty-ninth session the Commission and its secretariat, in accordance with the provisions of decision O (45) and other major decisions, have further strengthened their cooperation and coordination of activities with other international organizations and institutions, including bodies of the United Nations and its specialized agencies. This cooperation and coordination continues to be an important feature of the Commission's methods of work to ensure the optimum use of resources and expertise and to avoid duplication of work. The wide range of organizations with which ECE cooperates reflects its dual capacity as a United Nations programme and a regional body cooperating closely with other European institutions.

2. This note is divided into three parts. The first provides an account of the highlights of ECE cooperation with its major partners in the region, namely the European Union and the European Commission, OECD, OSCE (CSCE), EBRD, IMF, the World Bank, the Council of Europe and World Trade Organization (GATT). The second part gives an account of the main areas of cooperation with other intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations. The third part relates to ECE cooperation with the growing list of subregional groupings which have been created recently within the ECE region.

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A. ECE COOPERATION WITH ITS MAJOR PARTNERS

European Union and European Commission

3. While ECE cooperation with the **European Union** and the **European Commission** extends to all areas of its work, the following are the highlights of this cooperation since the forty-ninth session of the Commission.

Executive Direction and Management

4. The Executive Secretary visited the headquarters of the European Commission in November 1993 and plans a further visit in May 1995. He was received by the Commissioner for External Political Relations and other Senior Officials. In November 1994 he held a luncheon for European Union Ambassadors. The Office of the Executive Secretary continues to maintain close cooperation with the European Commission.

Environment

5. The European Commission regularly participates in the meetings of the ECE Working Group of Senior Governmental Officials "Environment for Europe" and actively cooperates in the formulation of the Environment Programme for Europe. The European Commission has earmarked around Ecu 100,000 to cover the cost of consultants entrusted with drafting the Programme, and earmarked some Ecu 300,000 to assist the Bulgarian Government in the organization of the Sofia Ministerial Conference "Environment for Europe" in October 1995.

6. The European Community (EC), being a Party to the 1979 Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution, regularly participates in sessions of the Executive Body and its subsidiary bodies and shares in the costs (3.33% of the budget) of the international coordination of monitoring, modelling and evaluation of air pollution in Europe (EMEP).

7. In principle, the EC countries have used the Convention as a vehicle to extend some of the EC regulations and standards, while, at the same time, using the momentum of the Convention to push policy forward within the EC. This balance should be kept alive. The lack of resources at the disposal of the secretariat for technical work justifies cooperation with the EC and particularly with the European Environment Agency (EEA) on technical matters.

Transport

8. ECE has participated in a number of meetings of the European Commission focusing on the development of the Trans European Networks for road, rail and combined transport. Furthermore, ECE regularly attends the sessions of the G-24 Working Group on Transport in order to contribute to the assistance to central and eastern European countries and is a member of the Steering Committee ensuring follow-up to the Second Pan-European Transport Conference. The European Commission is actively involved in practically all ECE working areas of inland transport and plays an important role in the preparation of international Agreements and Conventions concluded under the auspices of the Inland Transport Committee in the infrastructural and regulatory fields.

9. The main substantive areas in which ECE cooperates with the European Union are the following: definition of common criteria regarding bottlenecks,

missing links and quality of service of infrastructure networks; establishment of uniform safety and environmental conditions for the construction of road vehicles; customs questions affecting transport; transport of dangerous goods; and transport statistics, establishment of a joint questionnaire on transport statistics. The European Commission played an important role in the launching of the Conference on Transport and the Environment.

Statistics

10. Cooperation between ECE and the European Commission in statistics is based on a partnership:

- Eurostat will use TACIS funds to finance the participation of FSU countries in the 1995 CES plenary session

- Eurostat is using PHARE funds to finance the participation of central and east European countries in about 10 meetings organized by the Conference in different fields of statistics in 1994/95

- Eurostat has agreed to contribute approximately $30,000 this year to assist the secretariat in doing important work in the fields of statistics of women, population censuses and household income statistics

- Eurostat and ECE are jointly organizing nine meetings in 1994/94 (in the fields of business registers, environmental methods, waste and recycling statistics, agriculture statistics, migration statistics, statistics of services, population censuses, SNA and international price comparisons)

- Eurostat is an active member of the CES Bureau

- Eurostat actively works with the secretariat in several different intersecretariat working groups, whose main purpose is to improve coordination in specific fields of statistics

- Eurostat and ECE (and other international organizations) are now using joint questionnaires to collect statistics in different fields (e.g. energy statistics and international migration statistics). This has substantially reduced the reporting burden on countries

- Eurostat and ECE are currently jointly producing two statistical publications (on statistics of women and on environment statistics), and in the future they may also produce a joint publication on housing statistics

- Eurostat, ECE and OECD all actively participate in annual joint programme review meetings, whose main purpose is to coordinate international statistical work in the region.

Trade Facilitation

11. The European Commission participates actively in the activities of the Working Party on Facilitation of International Trade Procedures, and hosts the West European EDIFACT Board secretariat.

Economic Analysis

12. Cooperation with the European Commission consists largely of individual contacts between the secretariats of ECE and DG-II.

Energy

13. The secretariat has been maintaining and developing contacts with the Directorate-General for Energy as well as the CEC Directorate-General in charge of international cooperation, i.e. their international programme units for assistance to central and east European countries: PHARE, TACIS, THERMIE, regarding special activities and projects.

14. Since the introduction of major political changes in the countries of central and eastern Europe, these contacts have on occasion led to concrete cooperative action. While the ECE has most of the good ideas for cooperation with these countries, it is the European Union which provides the money for implementing projects.

15. In some instances it seems that CEC through its PHARE and TACIS programmes has been selecting project proposals initially developed by ECE without giving due recognition to the ECE for the good preparatory work. However, from examining files related to contacts prior to 1994 it transpires that ECE could have been more active in following up on funding possibilities for the activities initiated by ECE.

16. Events organized by ECE have also been attended by representatives of the European Community, although mostly by members of their Permanent Delegation in Geneva. The technical contributions from the CEC to these events has therefore been limited.

17. CEC played a very active role in the ECE Symposium on Clean Coal Technology (May 1993, Helsinki). A joint workshop was held in October 1993 in Brussels on Opportunities for the development of new economic activities in the coal-mining regions of central and eastern Europe and the CIS. The secretariat attended the EU Conference on New Energy Realities in the Black Sea Region (May 1994, Chalkidiki, Greece). Visits to Brussels to discuss opportunities for joint programming and EU funding of technical cooperation activities identified by ECE (funding of the gas centre, funding and joint management of programmes for energy efficiency and clean coal technology). There are regular consultations regarding the European Energy Charter and its Energy Efficiency Protocol.

18. Restructuring of the coal industry and its regional and social consequences: ECE was invited in 1994 to Strasbourg to participate in and contribute to a Special Session devoted to the reconversion of mining regions. ECE assisted the European Parliament in providing regional authorities from east European countries and especially from the Russian Federation in this event. Common activities are envisaged in this field in the near future.

Development of International Trade

19. The secretariat has working contacts in trade and FDI-related areas with the respective EC directorates and exchange information on issues of interest to ECE and EC.

Industry and Technology

20. The "Comparative Study of Chemical Legislation in ECE Member Countries" is financed by the European Union and EFTA. The study is being carried out under ECE aegis using the LEGICHIM database system at the EU; this to date only covers EU legislation. The study will extend that expertise to all ECE member States, to provide a framework for harmonized legislation within these States, and in particular to assist the newly industrializing economies to develop chemical legislation consistent with the rest of the ECE region, to ease technology transfer, trade, environmental and other relations.

21. A Steering Committee was established between representatives of the European Union and several other bodies, which published a report on "The Steel Industry in Europe". This was achieved by pooling information, contacts and resources of each organization, and with industry and government representatives of countries in transition (eight such countries participated). The report is the first of this type. While not making specific recommendations, the contents of the report clearly indicate directions for change and implies economic and social consequences of the changes which might occur (e.g. the loss of 300,000 jobs in the steel sector of eastern and central Europe). It was presented at a conference jointly sponsored by the organizations in April 1994 in Cracow. The study will be up-dated every two years. Considering the success of the report, a second phase of the project has begun: "Opportunities for Cooperation at the International Level in the Steel Sector".

22. An ECE Seminar was held to introduce to ECE member States the European Union PRODCOM, a new system to harmonize production and trade statistics which until PRODCOM were often not comparable. The practical application of PRODCOM is expected to begin in 1996.

23. There is substantial cooperation with the EU in establishing guidelines for biotechnology within the science and technology and standardization programmes.

Agriculture and Timber

24. The European Union and the European Commission participated in most sessions of the Committee on Agriculture and the Timber Committee and their subsidiary bodies. Cooperation is institutionalized in the field of statistics, with intersecretariat Working Groups coordinating statistical activities on agriculture subjects (together with FAO, OECD, Eurostat) and on timber and forestry (with Eurostat and FAO at this stage).

Human Settlements

25. In its work on guidelines on land administration, the ECE Committee on Human Settlements cooperates with the European Union PHARE Programme. A case-study on the Hungarian experience in establishing land registration system with the assistance of the PHARE Programme will be annexed to the guidelines. A joint workshop (Hungary/EU PHARE/ECE) on cadastre and land registration systems was held in Budapest (Hungary) in November 1994.

Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)

26. ECE cooperation with OECD covers a wide range of activities of which the highlights during the past year were the following.

Executive Direction and Management

27. The Executive Secretary visited the Headquarters of OECD in November 1993. He and his senior colleagues continue to maintain close relations with the Office of the Secretary-General of OECD and his senior officials.

Environment

28. OECD and ECE are cooperating to extend to the entire region systems and practices developed by OECD for its member countries, in particular in the field of the environmentally sound management of hazardous chemicals, economic instruments and national environmental performance reviews. A second ad hoc meeting on the management of hazardous chemicals was held in Vienna in October 1994 in cooperation with OECD. ECE is collaborating with OECD on the three OECD pilot environmental performance reviews of Poland, Bulgaria and Belarus. A workshop on the reviews was organized in close cooperation with OECD in Geneva (May 1994).

29. The joint meetings of the Bureaux of the ECE Committee on Environmental policy and the OECD Environment Policy Committee are continuing on an annual basis, illustrating successful cooperative management.

30. A Workshop on Chemical Accidents hosted by the Government of France has been organized in cooperation with OECD, in Divonne-les-Bains (France) (6-7 February 1995). The main objective of the Workshop was to assist Governments and industry to enhance capacity building to prevent, prepare for and respond to industrial accidents, with particular emphasis on countries in transition. The Workshop considered means and ways of involving the chemical industry in the implementation of the Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents in order to improve overall industrial safety in the ECE region and how coordination of the existing programmes dealing with the chemical safety within the framework of other international organizations and institutions can be improved to achieve this goal.

Transport

31. The main area in which ECE cooperates with OECD in transport is in the development of an international system of classification and labelling of dangerous goods, as a follow-up to Chapter 19 of Agenda 21. OECD is also participating in the preparatory work for the 1996 Regional Conference on Transport and the Environment.

Statistics

32. OECD provides a great deal of technical assistance, particularly concerned with national accounts, to virtually all the countries in transition. The secretariat works very closely with them in this context including the joint sponsoring of special meetings.

33. The secretariat has joint questionnaires with OECD (e.g. questionnaires on energy statistics) and share data in other areas. Data collection on economic statistics is closely coordinated with OECD.

34. The programme of statistical work of the ECE is closely coordinated with that of OECD and other organization through a number of formal and informal mechanisms. The head of statistics of the OECD is a permanent observer on the Bureau of the Conference of European Statisticians, and the heads of statistics of OECD and the ECE meet regularly to ensure close collaboration.

Trade Facilitation

35. Representatives from the Working Party on Facilitation of International Trade Procedures are participating in a study being developed by OECD on the Economic Impact of EDI.

Economic Analysis

36. Economists from the secretariat have continued to cooperate closely with OECD and to improve coordination by consultation on specific items in the work programme, especially as regards the transition economies. The secretariat has participated in the following meetings: Review Committee on Poland; Group of Financial Experts on Central and Eastern European Countries; and the Expert Group on Economics and Environmental Policy Integration. Consultations were also held on the respective work programmes of the two secretariats in the area of labour market issues in the transition economies.

Energy

37. An exchange of information took place in the field of coal statistics on trade, production, demand and transport. OECD was represented at the session of the Working Party on Coal Trade, Statistics and Transport.

Development of International Trade

38. Representatives of OECD regularly participate in sessions of the Committee on the Development of Trade including its latest meeting in December 1994. Representatives of the secretariat regularly participate in and contribute to the OECD meetings on investment promotion in transition economies and in meetings on FDI statistics organized under the auspices of OECD. The ECE and OECD secretariats are preparing a compendium of national practices in compiling FDI statistics.

Industry and Technology

39. An intersecretariat meeting is held every year in Geneva between OECD and the Steel section of the secretariat, together with the International Iron and Steel Institute, to harmonize statistical questionnaires and definitions of steel consumption. OECD and ECE jointly develop economic indicators on science and technology in the economies in transition, and establish statistical questionnaires for engineering industries and automation, and exchange input for database management.

Agriculture and Timber

40. OECD and ECE regularly participate in each others relevant activities, and OECD takes part in the intersecretariat working group on agricultural statistics. Intersecretariat consultations with OECD and FAO have been initiated on cooperation with countries in transition in the field of agricultural policies. The food quality standards elaborated by ECE are complemented with explanatory brochures prepared under the OECD Scheme for standardization of fresh fruits and vegetables. ECE contributed to an OECD seminar on Forestry, agriculture and environment where preliminary results of the ECE/FAO European Timber Trends study were presented.

Human Settlements

20. The Committee on Human Settlements has continued its cooperation with OECD on the project on ecological cities and has started cooperating on the urban indicator project. The ECE secretariat participated in a meeting of secretariats of international organizations working on the subject of urban indicators held at the OECD Headquarters in an effort to maximize the use of resources and ensure that their individual initiatives were complementary.

Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE/CSCE)

41. The secretariat contributed a review of economic developments and policy issues in the transition economies to the Economic Forum of the CSCE in March (see document E/ECE/1312).

European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD)

Executive Management and Direction

42. The Executive Secretary visited the Headquarters of EBRD in November 1994. He will represent the Secretary-General of the United Nations at the Annual Meeting of the Board of Governors of EBRD on 10 April 1995.

Environment

43. The EBRD, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) are cooperating with the ECE Working Group of Senior Governmental Officials "Environment for Europe" in the preparation of the Sofia Conference.

Transport

44. ECE is cooperating with EBRD and IBRD in the framework of the G-24 Working Group on Transport with a view to identifying priority investment projects in central and eastern Europe as a follow-up to the second Pan-European Transport Conference.

Economic Analysis

45. Contacts with the EBRD have been strengthened. A member of the secretariat attended the annual meeting of the Bank in St. Petersburg and consultations were held in December with the Chief Economist's office in London on various aspects of our respective work programmes. The secretariat has agreed to help the EBRD in its analysis of current economic developments

in the transition economies by supplying it with statistical data and pre-publication texts of ECE analysis.

Development of International Trade

46. Representatives of the EBRD regularly take part in meetings of the Working Party on International Contract Practices in Industry and provide presentations on related issues. The secretariat and respective divisions of EBRD exchange publications and studies. In 1994, an article on the Working Party's assistance to countries in transition was published in the EBRD publication "Law in Transition".

Industry and Technology

47. A "Global Study on the Steel Industry" is funded in part by EBRD and the World Bank. The study covers product lines, existing capacities, production, trade and consumption for steel products to the year 2000.

48. It is hoped that these organizations will participate in funding the "Pilot Project Demonstrating the Environmental Cleanup of Selected Sites Polluted by Chemicals", for which substantial interest has been shown by central and east European countries. To date nearly forty sites have been identified in those States, and a Meeting of Experts is scheduled for March 1995 to continue this project.

International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Bank

Transport

49. ECE participated in a Seminar on road safety in central and eastern Europe, organized jointly by the World Bank and the EC-PHARE and TACIS programmes in 1994.

Statistics

50. ECE works particularly closely with the IMF and the World Bank in data sharing and data collection, and in collaboration in technical assistance to countries in transition. The heads of statistics from the IMF and the World Bank are currently observers in the Bureau of the Conference of European Statisticians, and both organizations contribute to the joint presentation of statistical programmes which is considered by the plenary session of the Conference this year.

Council of Europe

51. The Council of Europe is cooperating actively with the ECE in the preparation of the Sofia Ministerial Conference, particularly by drawing up a pan-European biodiversity strategy for submission to the Sofia Conference.

52. The ECE secretariat also collaborates with the Council of Europe. An excellent example of close collaboration during the last year has been in monitoring the special census of population in The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

53. Following the European Population Conference, which was co-organized by ECE, the Council of Europe and UNFPA as a regional preparatory meeting for the International Conference on Population and Development, the three organizations jointly published two volumes of proceedings of the Conference along with the conference recommendations.

54. The ECE Committee on Human Settlements has continued its cooperation with the Council of Europe on sustainable development for urban areas, and joint activities are envisaged with the Social Development Fund of the Council of Europe on the Committee's project on country profiles of the housing sector. The ECE secretariat contributed a paper (Towards sustainable human settlements) to the Tenth European Conference of Ministers Responsible for Regional Planning (CEMAT), which took place in Oslo in 1994.

World Trade Organization (WTO/GATT)

55. The ECE secretariat participates in regular sessions of GATT on selected commodities, providing updated information. The WTO (GATT) Secretariat Trade Policy Division assisted ECE in preparing the Round-table discussion paper for the Committee on the Development of Trade in December 1994 and a senior member of the GATT secretariat took part in the meeting. ECE has working contacts in trade areas related to countries in transition with the respective WTO staff members.

B. ECE COOPERATION WITH OTHER INTERGOVERNMENTAL AND NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

56. ECE cooperates with very many other organizations in the implementation of its programmes of work. The following is a list of the main features of that cooperation since the forty-ninth session of the Commission.

Environment

57. A new cooperative arrangement has been made between the Committee on Environmental Policy and the World Health Organization Regional Office for Europe (WHO/EURO). Following the second European Conference on Environment and Health (Helsinki, June 1994), the European Environment and Health Committee (EEHC) was established for the implementation of the Environmental Health Action Plan for Europe, to identify and address emerging environmental health issues and to cooperate with partners in the "Environment for Europe" process. It is made up of four representatives designated by WHO/EURO and four representatives selected by the Committee on Environmental Policy, and representatives from relevant international organizations and institutions.

58. In the preparations for the new Protocol on Further Reduction of Sulphur Emissions (adopted in 1994), integrated assessment modelling played a prominent role. Decisive contributions came from the International Institute of Applied Systems Analysis (IIASA) and the Stockholm Environment Institute (SEI). The work was channelled through the Task Force on Integrated Assessment Modelling and the Working Group on Strategies. It is expected that similar cooperation will be carried out in developing the second step to the Protocol concerning the Control of Emissions of Nitrogen Oxides or their Transboundary Fluxes.

59. On effect-related matters WHO, through its European Centre for Environment and Health, contributes substantially to the scientific basis for negotiations on emission reductions. Such input is expected to increase in importance for the preparatory work on nitrogen compounds, persistent organic pollutants (POPs) and heavy metals, all covered in the work-plan of the Executive Body. The WHO contributions are channelled through the Working Group on Effects.

60. The same channel is used informally to benefit from the information compiled by the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN). The information relates, in particular to the ecological effects of acidification.

61. Under the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes, comprehensive guidelines to ECE Governments on the control of water pollution from fertilizers and pesticides have been prepared under the auspices of the Committee on Environmental Policy and the Committee on Agriculture in cooperation with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). Moreover, ECE and the FAO Regional Office for Europe are cooperating in the preparation of a regional workshop on water pollution control from agriculture to be hosted in October 1995 by Croatia.

62. A number of non-governmental organizations (NGOs), such as the European Environmental Bureau (EEB), Friends of the Earth (FOE), Global Legislators for a Balanced Environment (GLOBE), International Chamber of Commerce (ICC), International Council of Environmental Law, the Regional Environmental Center (REC) in Budapest, the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN), the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) and others, are actively participating in the preparation of the Sofia Ministerial Conference. They are preparing inputs for the Conference and attending the meetings under the auspices of the Working Group of Senior Governmental Officials "Environment for Europe", the central coordinating body for this process.

63. ECE cooperated with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) in the context of the joint ECE/UNEP project on Strengthening Environmental Management Capabilities in Eastern and Central European Countries. Within this project four workshops were held in 1994. The results of the workshops laid the basis for a set of recommendations to Governments of ECE countries with economies in transition to a market economy in the form of Guidelines on Integrated Environmental Management in Countries in Transition (ECE/CEP/5). Under the project a computerized database for environmental impact assessment has also been prepared. Discussions have begun with UNEP in an effort to prepare a series of regional workshops on water management, which will help to resolve issues arising from Agenda 21, from the ECE Action Plan to implement Agenda 21 and from the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes.

Transport

64. ECE cooperates with the European Conference of Ministers of Transport (ECMT) in bringing the results of ECE work in transport to the attention of Ministers and also in developing into the ECE legal instruments the Resolutions adopted by Ministers. Specific areas of cooperation are the definition of common criteria regarding bottlenecks, missing links and quality

of service of infrastructure networks; road traffic safety; environmental questions, in particular regarding the establishment of environmental standards for vehicles in international road traffic; combined transport; road transport statistics, including the establishment of a joint questionnaire.

65. ECE cooperates with the Central Commission for the Navigation on the Rhine (CCNR) and with the Danube Commission on infrastructure requirements regarding inland waterways, requirements concerning the construction of inland navigation vessels, rules of the road in inland navigation, and harmonization of technical, safety and legal requirements in inland navigation. In addition cooperation continues with the following organizations: International Union of Railways (UIC) (rail transport infrastructure, facilitation of border crossing in international rail transport); Organization for Cooperation between Railways (OSZhD) (rail transport infrastructure, international customs transit procedures for the carriage of goods by rail); International Organization for International Carriage by Rail (OTIF) (facilitation of border crossing in international rail transport, international customs transit procedures for the carriage of goods by rail, transport of dangerous goods); International Road Transport Union (road transport facilitation questions, in particular international transport of goods under cover of TIR carnets, transport of dangerous goods by road); International Road Transport Federation (IRF) (road transport infrastructure); International Touring Alliance (AIT) and International Automobile Federation (FIA) (customs questions, road transport safety, construction of vehicles); International Organization of Motor Vehicle Manufacturers (OICA) (motor vehicle manufacturing, motor vehicles for the transport of dangerous goods).

Trade Facilitation

66. In its legal work programme the Working Party on Facilitation of International Trade Procedures is cooperating with UNCITRAL to develop solutions to avoid legal and commercial practice barriers to trade.

67. A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) has been developed between ECE and ISO/IEC concerning cooperation in the field of Electronic Data Interchange (EDI).

68. The European Free Trade Association and the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation Forum (APEC) are also examples of regional organizations which use trade facilitation recommendations for regional implementation.

69. UNCTAD is actively engaged in the promotion and implementation of trade facilitation techniques in, and outside, the ECE region. In particular, the UNCTAD World Trade Summit on Trade Efficiency (Columbus, Ohio, 1994) emphasized the importance of implementing UN/EDIFACT and other trade facilitation recommendations.

Economic Analysis

70. An economist attended the annual meeting of the BIS and consulted BIS economists on their work on the transition economies.

71. As part of the follow-up to the European Population Conference (Geneva, March 1993), which was jointly organized by the ECE Population Activities Unit, the Council of Europe and UNFPA, these organizations have jointly

published two volumes of conference proceedings and the recommendations of the Conference. The volumes include, among other things, five basic papers of the Conference and country statements submitted by ECE member Governments.

72. As part of the preparations for the World Summit for Social Development, ECE and the American Association of Retired Persons are jointly organizing a Workshop on Population Ageing in Europe and North America: a Message to the World Summit for Social Development (Geneva, 13-14 February 1995). Participants in the workshop will include representatives of various intergovernmental organizations, in particular the World Health Organization, non-governmental organizations, Governments and academia. The workshop will focus on public policy responses to population ageing in the ECE region.

Energy

73. ECE cooperates closely with the International Labour Organisation on social aspects of restructuring the coal industry and on mine safety - ILO was co-organizer for the Workshop on Occupational Safety and provided funds for several east European participants. ECE participated in and contributed to the 1995 ILO Coal Commission annual session.

74. ECE cooperates with the World Coal Institute (NGO) which provides experts for ECE meetings in the field of coal, supports ECE policies and programmes, takes part in the organization of ECE events (Meeting of Experts on Clean Coal Technology, Symposium on Sustainable Development, etc.).

Development of International Trade

75. In 1994 working contacts were established with the UNIDO divisions dealing with the promotion of FDI and SMEs. At their request studies on investment and on SMEs prepared by the secretariat were sent to UNIDO.

76. ECE cooperates closely with UNCTAD on trade, foreign investment and privatization issues. Representatives of the two secretariats participate in and contribute to meetings organized by other organizations and exchange information on issues of common interest.

77. ECE took part in preparing and conducting the workshop on the CIS and Baltic States on regional trade, payments and economic cooperation (Republic of Moldova, January 1995). The meeting was financed by UNDP and organized by UNCTAD in cooperation with ECE and ITC.

Industry and Technology

78. The Working Party on the Chemical Industry has a long-standing association with the European Chemical Industry Council (CEFIC), which provides industrial expertise and guidance on many of its projects. CEFIC are also regular attenders of, and active contributors to, the annual Working Party sessions. Similar arrangements are now being generated with the European Federation of Chemical Engineers (EFCE) and other professional societies (e.g. BCECA, the British Chemical Engineering Contractors Association, whose members' activities are in fact 60% outside the UK).

79. The secretariat has begun discussions with the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) with respect to cooperation in the

development of the on-going study of Comparative Chemical Legislation noted above. This organization is interested both in providing input as well as using the results of the study.

80. During the last annual session of the Working Party on the Chemical Industry a Round-Table discussion was chaired by the Association of Plastics Manufacturers in Europe (APME), comprising virtually all European petrochemical and polymer companies, who also provided several of the lead speakers. A similar arrangement is now being developed with the International Rubber Study Group (IRSG), a forum comprising some 80% of the world's rubber producers. Close cooperation between APME, IRSG and the section's activities will be very useful in assuring good technical operating and training conditions in the chemically-based synthetic materials industries of the countries in transition.

81. Close cooperation and regular contacts with some 25-30 international organizations in the engineering industries and automation area during the past five years has significantly contributed to information and avoided duplication of efforts. Cooperation with the International Federation of Robotics (IFR) on industrial robotics, leading to a successful UN sales publication, and with the International Federation for Medical and Biological Engineering (IFMBE) on the implementation of new medical technologies in the region are two such examples.

82. Similarly, the Working Party on Standardization Policies cooperates regularly with the International Organization for Legal Metrology (OIML), the EFTA secretariat, the Council of Independent States (CIS) and many international and regional standards bodies (foremost ISO and IEC) in setting priorities for international, regional and national standards work and formulating recommendations aimed at facilitating international cooperation and removing technical barriers to international trade. This cooperation takes the form of regular (annual) exchanges of information and the organization of joint activities (e.g. a training programme on metrology for participants from countries in transition organized jointly between the ECE secretariat and OIML to take place in Paris (France) in March 1995).

83. The secretariat maintains contact with the Central European Initiative (CEI) through participation in the fourth Plenary Meeting of the Working Party on SMEs, in partial fulfilment of the ECE commitment to commence cooperation in transport, environment and energy sectors. The Ministerial Meeting on Trade and Industry Cooperation will take place in Skopje, FYROM, in March 1995, and the secretariat will prepare the ECE position paper.

84. The European Regional Industrial Development Organization (ERIDO) and the European Research Foundation and Institute (ERFI) have actively supported the ECE Industry and Technology idea of launching a "European Forum on Sustainable Industrial Development" and co-chaired the ECE Meeting of Experts held in Geneva in November 1994 to consider proposals for such a Forum. ERIDO would like to launch a training programme jointly with the ECE on "Facility Location Planning and Regional Economic Development in Central Europe". This is presently in the planning stage, and financing of the course by the EU is part of the structure of the programme.

Agriculture and Timber

85. Cooperation with FAO is materialized mainly by its contribution to the Joint FAO/ECE Agriculture and Timber Division and the five joint ECE/FAO Working Parties under the Committee on Agriculture and the Timber Committee. A decision by FAO to transfer its staff from joint divisions with the United Nations Regional Economic Commissions, effective in the first half of 1995, puts an end to this form of cooperation. The new cooperation framework enables continuation of joint activities in the field of Timber, but requires reconsideration of activities under the Committee on Agriculture.

86. Discussions are being held with the FAO secretariat of the Codex Alimentarius Commission in order to improve the working arrangements between the ECE Working Party on standardization of perishable produce and quality development and the Codex Committee on Tropical Fresh Fruits and vegetables (CCTFFV).

87. ILO provides critical secretariat inputs into the Joint FAO/ECE/ILO Committee on Forest Technology, Management and Training.

88. ECE/FAO contributes to the follow-up process to the Ministerial Conferences of Strasbourg and Helsinki on the Protection of Forests in Europe and acts as international coordinator for the monitoring of the implementation of Resolution H3 on Forestry Cooperation with Countries in transition.

Human Settlements

89. The Committee has continued its cooperation with NGOs. It holds regular meetings to enhance this collaboration. NGO representatives participate in the work of task forces, and actively take part in ECE workshops. A joint ECE/International Union of Tenants workshop is scheduled to take place in June 1995.

C. ECE COOPERATION WITH SUBREGIONAL GROUPINGS

Environment

90. Cooperation has been strengthened between ECE and the **Central European Initiative (CEI)** programme on promoting territorial/spatial sustainable development with a view to contributing to the definition of the programme's objectives, the coordination of planning and implementation of projects under ECE and CEI auspices and to arrange for feedback on the experience and results from the subregional to the regional level. The CEI 2010 consultative meeting on sustainable economic development in central Europe convened by the Hungarian Government with the support of the European Union PHARE Programme in Budapest from 12 to 13 January 1995 welcomed the ECE support for this CEI programme and the ECE readiness to play an active role, in particular, through the relevant ECE conventions and programmes. These are seen as efficient tools in furthering spatial development in particular in a transboundary context, including water and air quality monitoring networks; environment and health impact assessment; public participation in development projects; contingency planning and simulation exercises; energy efficiency demonstration zones promoting small and medium-sized enterprises; and transport infrastructure improvements.

91. In preparing for new legal instruments on nitrogen compounds, persistent organic pollutants and heavy metals, cooperation and coordination with the commissions for the subregional sea conventions are being enhanced. This concerns, in particular, the **Oslo-Paris Commission for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic (OSPARCOM)** and the **Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission (HELCOM)**, and to a lesser degree the **Mediterranean Action Plan of the Barcelona Convention for the Protection of the Mediterranean Sea against Pollution**. The cooperation and coordination relate to the criteria for and the selection of substances for regulation, consistency in commitments for emission reductions, and harmonization of monitoring and reporting. The relevant subsidiary bodies under the conventions and the secretariats are involved in this cooperation.

92. Under the Arctic Environmental Protection Strategy, adopted by the environment ministers of the eight Arctic countries, an **Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Programme (AMAP)** has been established. It gives priority to persistent organic pollutants, heavy metals, radio-nucleids and acidification. The ministers have agreed that the necessary action on POPs, heavy metals and acidification for the protection of the Arctic region should be taken, as appropriate, under the Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution. This calls for close cooperation on effect studies, economic and technical assessments, monitoring and policy development. The secretariats provide the necessary liaison between the relevant bodies.

93. At the Workshop on Environmental Impact Assessment in the Arctic Area convened under the Arctic Environmental Protection Strategy, countries in the Arctic area decided to implement the ECE Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context, to further adapt its provisions to the needs of the Arctic area and to further strengthen the cooperation between the countries in the region with respect to environmental protection.

Transport

94. ECE has participated in a number of subregional Ministerial Transport Conferences, such as the **Baltic Sea Transport Conference** in Warsaw, and the **Central European Transport Conferences** in Sopron, Brijuni and Bratislava, and the **Black Sea Transport Conference** in Constanta. The ECE has also participated in several meetings of the **Central European Initiative** and contributed in this connection to infrastructural and regulatory questions in transport.

Statistics

95. In statistics, the ECE has a close relationship with the **CIS Statistical Committee**. Their representatives attend many of our meetings and we rely upon them for the provision of statistics on countries of the former Soviet Union.

Energy

96. **Black Sea Economic Cooperation** is a regional grouping composed of Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Georgia, Greece, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Turkey and Ukraine. At its meeting of Meetings of Foreign Affairs in June 1994 (Tbilisi) it was decided to establish a Working Group on Energy. This Working Group had its first meeting in Varna in October 1994 and the BSEC Council had a general overview of the energy sector

in its member countries to identify the real energy-related issues and needs of this region. A group of projects were proposed by the BSEC Council: an interconnection of electric power systems of member countries, electricity tariffs, rehabilitation of thermal power stations and transmission lines, supervisory control and data acquisition systems for electricity distribution. The secretariat has contributed to their booklet on the Energy Situation in the BSEC Region. ECE could contribute or jointly carry out some of their project proposals, due to its long-standing experience in international interconnections and other energy-related issues.

97. ECE could contribute to the activities of the Central Europe Initiative by reviewing the energy and environment-related issued.

98. As regards cooperation in the Mediterranean countries, in the area of renewables, efforts under the Committee on Energy continue to support the development and utilization of RSE in the ECE region and especially Mediterranean countries. A workshop on RSE was held in cooperation with the Government of Spain and the Plataforma Solar de Almeria in May 1994. Israel is exploring the possibility of hosting a workshop on solar energy in cooperation with ECE.

99. In 1998 the **UNDP-ECE Solar Applications and Energy Efficiency in Building Design Project** was launched to develop a mini-computer programme, operators' manual, design guidelines and training courses for practising architects in southern and eastern Europe to learn energy efficiency building design techniques implemented in western Europe during the last 15 years. An Ad Hoc Meeting of Experts was held in London in July 1990 at the beginning of a study tour in the United Kingdom of British energy efficient buildings, products, building materials and technology. This project had particular benefits for countries in the Mediterranean and served as an example of interregional outreach. As an associated agency to UNIDO the ECE secretariat prepared an annual report on the macro-economic and energy policy context of industrial energy conservation policies in the region since 1989.

100. In 1989 a Symposium on the Optimum Use of Primary Energy in Final Heat Consumption was held to review efficiency improvements throughout the energy system. A Symposium on Energy Efficiency Measures in Industry was held in Slovenia in 1991.

Development of International Trade

101. **International Committee for Economic Reform and Cooperation (ICERC).** Established in 1993 in Kiev, Ukraine with the support of the CIS states (particularly Russian Federation), countries of central and eastern Europe, western countries and international institutions. Aims of the ICERC: development of practical projects and programmes in order to stimulate trade and investment among the countries of the region and to promote east-west economic cooperation and investment. Contacts with ICERC were established in January 1995. It was decided that both sides will exchange information on issues of common interest and on meetings organized by them. ECE was invited to participate in the ICERC's meeting on improving conditions for FDI in NIS and in central and eastern Europe, to be held in Bonn in February 1995.

Human Settlements

102. The delegations of the Baltic States offered to organize the study visits following the Committee's fifty-sixth session in September 1995. These study visits are currently being organized and will focus on: (a) social housing policies; (b) policies for and practical problems of tackling energy issues in housing; and (c) inner-city conservation and urban renewal. Furthermore, a workshop on housing privatization is scheduled to take place in Estonia in 1995.

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RESOLUTIONS BEARING ON THE WORK OF THE COMMISSION ADOPTED BY THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL AND THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Note by the Executive Secretary

1. In this Note the Executive Secretary brings to the Commission's attention the resolutions and decisions 1/ bearing on the work of the Commission which were adopted by the Economic and Social Council at its regular session in 1994, and by the General Assembly at its resumed forty-eighth and its forty-ninth sessions, namely during the period since the forty-ninth session of the Commission.

2. The resolutions and decisions are divided into two groups: Part I, those which directly bear on the work of the Commission, and Part II, those which the Commission may wish to keep in mind in its further work.

1/ The relevant extracts from these texts are quoted or summarized in this note as necessary. The full texts are contained in the official Records of the Council and of the General Assembly.

GE.95-20497

PART I

A. RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED BY THE COUNCIL AT ITS REGULAR SESSION, 1994

1994/1 Integration of the Commission on Transnational Corporations into the institutional machinery of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development

3. In paragraph 1, the Council decides that the Commission on Transnational Corporations should become a commission of the Trade and Development Board and be renamed the Commission on International Investment and Transnational Corporations.

4. Since UNCTAD and ECE share the same duty station, the Joint ECE/CTC Unit has been disbanded. However cooperation between ECE and UNCTAD in the field of transnational corporations will be extended to a wider range of sectors.

1994/2 Work programme in the field of population

5. See paragraphs 25-26 below.

B. RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY AT ITS RESUMED FORTY-EIGHTH AND ITS FORTY-NINTH SESSIONS

48/215 Commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations

6. The second Road Safety Week, organized under the auspices of the Inland Transport Committee from 27 March to 2 April 1995 will contribute to the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations. Young road users have been chosen as the target group for this year's campaign.

49/97 Strengthening international organizations in the area of multilateral trade

7. In operative paragraphs 2 and 3, the Assembly:

> "2. Urges all Governments, competent regional economic integration organizations and the executive heads of the competent specialized agencies and of other organizations and programmes of the United Nations system to continue to present their views to the Secretary-General on institutional developments related to the strengthening of international organizations in the area of multilateral trade;
>
> 3. Requests the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its fifty-first session on further institutional developments related to the strengthening of international organizations in the area of multilateral trade and, in preparing that report, to solicit the views of all Governments, competent regional economic integration organizations and the executive heads of the competent specialized agencies and other organizations and programmes of the United Nations system on institutional developments related to the strengthening of international organizations in the area of multilateral trade."

49/101 United Nations International Symposium on Trade Efficiency

8. In the resolution the Assembly notes the valuable contribution of the ECE Working Party on the Facilitation of International Trade Procedures to the successful conclusion of the Symposium, and invites all States to take an active part in the implementation of the concept of trade efficiency based on open data interchange systems and internationally recognized standards with the cooperation, as appropriate, of the private sector and the relevant bodies of the United Nations system.

9. The Executive Secretary met with the Secretary-General of UNCTAD and the Director of ITC to discuss the follow-up to the Symposium and future cooperation. The positive outcome of the Symposium creates many opportunities for synergy between the three organizations in their efforts to develop trade and global commerce. It is recognized that trade facilitation techniques and UN/EDIFACT contribute to more efficient trade practices and that the Working Party on Facilitation of International Trade Procedures (WP.4) is the recognized focal point where trade facilitation measures and standards are developed. On the other hand, UNCTAD is in a unique position for promoting the results of WP.4, in particular through its Trade Efficiency programme. ITC has special competence in providing market information. Thus in coordinating the activities it has been agreed to use UN/EDIFACT standards in the implementation of Trade Point Network and that activities related to national Trade Facilitation and Trade Efficiency bodies should not be duplicated.

49/102 Transit environment in the land-locked States in Central Asia and their transit developing neighbours

10. In the resolution the Assembly recognizes that the overall socio-economic development efforts of these countries, seeking to enter world markets through the establishment of a multicountry transit system, are impeded by a lack of territorial access to the sea as well as by remoteness and isolation from world markets, and emphasizes the importance of strengthening international support measures to address further the problems of these countries. The Assembly:

> "1. Invites the Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, in consultation with the Governments concerned and in cooperation with the United Nations Development Programme, the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, the Economic Commission for Europe, the Economic Cooperation Organization, and, in accordance with approved programme priorities and within existing financial resources, to elaborate a programme for improving the efficiency of the current transit environment in the newly independent and developing land-locked States in Central Asia and their transit developing neighbours and to make a comprehensive analysis of the transit system for Central Asian countries, paying particular attention to the development of all new, appropriate and feasible alternative transit routes and corridors, including the shortest ones;
>
> ...
>
> 3. Requests the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, in collaboration with the relevant international and regional organizations referred to in the present resolution, to study

the possibility of holding, within existing financial resources, a regional symposium for the newly independent and developing land-locked States in Central Asia and their transit developing neighbours, with the participation of other interested States, on transport and transit issues in the region, upon completion of the comprehensive analysis and study requested in paragraph 1 of the present resolution and before this issue is taken up by the General Assembly at its fifty-first session."

11. The ECE administers a considerable number of global United Nations Conventions governing transit, temporary importation procedures as well as general transport facilitation measures, such as the TIR Convention or the Convention on the Harmonization of Border Controls. In view of this expertise and the priority accorded by ECE member countries to assistance measures for countries in transition, the ECE can, and is ready to, within existing resources, assist UNCTAD in the elaboration of a programme for improving the efficiency of transit traffic in the newly independent and developing land-locked States in Central Asia.

12. The ECE secretariat has prepared a contribution to the UNCTAD Symposium for Land-Locked and Transit Developing Countries on experience gained in the region in the field of land transport facilitation.

49/106 Integration of the economies in transition into the world economy

13. In the resolution the Assembly takes note of Commission decisions B (49) and C (49) and of the Economic Survey of Europe in 1993-1994 and·

"1. Invites the United Nations system to continue its support for the efforts of economies in transition as they transform their economies and integrate them into the world economy through, inter alia, adoption of the international standards and practices of countries with market economies;

2. Welcomes the measures undertaken by the UniteD Nations system to strengthen its abilities in response to General Assembly resolution 48/181 on the economies in transition, and calls upon the United Nations system to continue to conduct analytical activities, and to provide policy advice and technical assistance to the economies in transition, tailored to each country's respective stage of economic transformation;

3. Calls upon the United Nations system to continue studying, within the scope of the implementation of the present resolution and while continuing the existing cooperation with relevant international institutions and entities, possible ways of enhancing economic and technical cooperation among countries with economies in transition, as well as with developing countries, identifying how the United Nations system can strengthen cooperation, while avoiding duplication, with a vie to encouraging greater participation by those countries in the world economy."

14. For an account of ECE activities designed to assist the countries in transition in their integration into the European and global economy, since the forty-ninth session, see document E/ECE/1310.

49/108 Sustainable development and international economic cooperation: Industrial development cooperation

15. In operative paragraph 6 the Assembly "calls upon the organizations and bodies of the United Nations system ... to contribute, in the context of their programmes and activities, to achieving the aims and action programmes adopted by the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, and the International Conference on Population and Development, and calls upon them to contribute to the preparations for the World Summit for Social Development and the Fourth World Conference on Women".

16. In its decision F (49), the Commission took note with appreciation of the ECE Action Plan to implement Agenda 21 adopted at UNCED (E/ECE/1303). The Plan describes the present and future ECE activities in this area including those related to cooperation aimed at sustainable industrial development. Some of these activities may be mentioned in this context, namely: the programme "Chemical Industry - Sustainable Economic and Ecological Development" (CHEMISEED)", the programme of Metallurgy and Ecology, and the inventory of existing safety guidelines in biotechnology.

17. In its decision A (49) the Commission decided to hold a meeting of experts to consider proposals to convene a possible European Forum on Sustainable Industrial Development. The meeting was held on 2 November 1994 (IND/AC.1/2) and following its recommendation the secretariat has prepared an analytical document (IND/AC.1/3) for consideration at the present session of the Commission so that a final decision on the convening of the Forum on identified priority issues could be take at the fiftieth session of the Commission.

49/109 United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II)

18. In paragraph 15 of the resolution the Assembly requests the regional commissions to include in their programme activities for 1995 an item on the preparations for the Conference, with particular emphasis on preparations for he Conference in their respective regions, and to submit a report on those preparations to the Assembly at its fiftieth session.

19. An ECE Regional Preparatory Meeting for Habitat II was held in Geneva on 12 September 1994. The Committee on Human Settlements at its fifty-fifth session in September 1994 agreed to include the preparations for the Habitat II Conference as a distinct programme element in its programme of work. The Committee further established a task force to assist the Committee in carrying out the preparatory work.

49/113 Dissemination of the principles of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development

20. In paragraph 2 the Assembly requests the Secretary-General to ensure that the Declaration is widely disseminated by the competent organs and bodies of the United Nations system and to continue to ensure that its principles are incorporated in their programmes and processes, in accordance with paragraphs 32 and 42 of chapter I of the report of the Commission on Sustainable Development on its first session.

21. The Commission, which has adopted sustainable development as a guiding principle for the activities of all relevant subsidiary bodies, has pursued the dissemination of the principles stemming from the Rio Conference. Its Principal Subsidiary Bodies are promoting these principles by integrating environmental concerns and considerations into projects and programmes in all areas.

22. Sustainable development is a major driving force behind the "Environment for Europe" process and in particular the Sofia Ministerial Conference (October 1995), for which the Commission is assuming the central coordinating role. It is also in the same spirit that the Regional Conference on Transport and Environment, to be held in 1996, is being prepared under ECE auspices.

23. The Commission's efforts to draw up and implement legally binding instruments in the field of environment have been pursued during the past year. These instruments constitute powerful tools to strive for the convergence of environmental and sectoral policies.

24. Through the Joint Working Group on Environment and Economics, the Commission gathers experts from both fields to assess the environmental and economic situation in countries in transition and promotes the use of economic instruments for environmental policies. The efforts undertaken by the Commission to review the environmental performance of some of the countries in transition is also in line with the principles stated in Agenda 21.

49/128 Report of the International Conference on Population and Development

25. In the resolution the Assembly:

> "8. Acknowledges the importance of the subregional and regional activities undertaken during the preparations for the Conference, including the regional strategies, plans and declarations adopted as part of this process, and invites the regional commissions, other regional and subregional organizations and the development banks to examine the results of the Conference held at Cairo within their respective mandates, for the follow-up and implementation of the Programme of Action, at the regional level;
>
> 14. Acknowledges that countries with economies in transition should receive temporary assistance for population and development activities in light of the difficult economic and social problems faced by these countries at present, and therefore suggests that the specialized agencies and all related organizations of the United Nations system should adjust, on this basis, their programmes and activities in line with the Programme of Action and take appropriate measures to ensure its full and effective implementation;
>
> 33. Calls upon the programmes of the United Nations system and the regional commissions and funds to provide their full and active support to the implementation of the Programme of Action, particularly at the field level, through the United Nations coordinator system, and invites the relevant specialized agencies to do the same."

26. The Assembly further stressed the importance of continued and enhanced cooperation and coordination within the United Nations system and specialized agencies in the implementation of the Programme of Action, reviewing and where necessary adjusting their programmes and activities, and emphasized the need for follow-up activities to ensure its full and effective implementation, using to the fullest extent possible existing capacity within the United Nations system.

49/153 Towards full integration of persons with disabilities in society: implementation of the Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities, and of the Long-term Strategy to Implement the World Programme of Action Concerning Disabled Persons to the Year 2000 and Beyond

27. In paragraph 4 of Part II of the resolution, the Assembly "requests the regional commissions and other regional organizations to facilitate the adaptation and transfer of global approaches, standards and disability-related technology to the specific needs of the region".

28. During recent years, the Working Party on Engineering Industries and Automation has convened three workshops on rehabilitation engineering and has prepared the publication "Rehabilitation Engineering" (ECE/ENG.AUT/55, Sales No. 94.II.E.17) with the aim of facilitating the adaptation and transfer of global approaches, standards and disability-related technology to the specific needs of the ECE region.

49/161 Implementation of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women

29. In the resolution the Assembly expresses its satisfaction with the plans and platforms emanating from the Regional Preparatory Meetings for the Fourth World Conference on Women organized by the regional commissions. Paragraph 4 calls again upon Member States to give priority to policies and programmes relating to the theme "Employment, health and education"; such a theme constitutes a major strategic objective of the ECE Regional Platform for Action, namely to "Promote equal treatment between women and men workers and the harmonization of work and family responsibilities", covering employment and earnings, working conditions in the workplace, education and training for women, access to women to entrepreneurship, reconciliation of work and family responsibilities, and health needs of women.

30. Paragraph 32 calls upon UN bodies and specialized agencies to participate in the World Conference and to realign priorities and redirect resources to meet the global priorities identified in the Platform for Action.

31. A first discussion on substantive work and related resources within the ECE will take place at the fiftieth session of the Commission session under provisional agenda item 7(d), in the framework of the follow-up to the Vienna Meeting and as requested in the ECE Platform for Action. The discussion will take place on the basis of the Platform and the full report of the Meeting (E/ECE/RW/HLM/7 and 8).

PART II

A. RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED BY THE COUNCIL AT ITS REGULAR SESSION, 1994

1994/6 Improvement of the status of women in the Secretariat

1994/25 Admission of Armenia as a member of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

1994/27 Establishment of a committee on social development within the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia

B. RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY AT ITS RESUMED FORTY-EIGHTH AND ITS FORTY-NINTH SESSIONS

48/237 Observer status for the Commonwealth of Independent States in the General Assembly

48/261 Decentralization of activities and resources in the fields of energy and natural resources

49/126 Agenda for development

49/127 International migration and development

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COMMISSION'S CONTRIBUTION AND FOLLOW-UP TO THE UNITED NATIONS GLOBAL PROGRAMMES AND TO THE ORGANIZATION'S PROGRAMMES DESIGNED TO ASSIST DEVELOPING COUNTRIES OF OTHER REGIONS

Note by the Executive Secretary

1. The present note provides a short account of the efforts to increase the outreach of ECE and intensify its contribution to the global programmes of the United Nations. Regular consultations and response to the different reporting requirements to service the global United Nations intergovernmental bodies have been considerably increased, which has resulted in greater visibility for the ECE work programme and results achieved. The ECE coordinating role with other regional commissions has provided an opportunity to strengthen interaction and jointly agreed positions in global and other United Nations meetings.

2. The relationship between the regional commissions and the global entities of the United Nations system will be discussed at the Senior Officials meeting convened by the Secretary General on 21-22 February 1995. The aim of the meeting is to enhance effectiveness and reinforce management in the economic and social sectors of the Organization in revitalizing the regional commissions to increase their responsiveness to national priorities, and adapting their role and contribution to changing realities at both the global and regional levels.

3. His objective is to refocus and streamline the work of the commissions to become centres of excellence in their respective regions, as well as catalysts for more coherent regional strategies and active forces for enhanced regional cooperation and integration.

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4. The Secretary-General is also concerned to strengthen linkages between the commissions and the economic departments and programmes at Headquarters, so that opportunities that exist for regional approaches and solutions to development problems are fully exploited, and regional capacities are mobilized in pursuing global development.

5. In the background document prepared by the regional commissions they emphasise their ability to address problems of specific concern to member States of their region, their multidisciplinary structure, their capacity to take initiatives which could not be successfully achieved at the global level, their rapid adaptation to changing needs in a region as they have an important intergovernmental mechanism which monitors closely their programme of work. The document also emphasizes that most of the issues have global and regional components and that greater attention should be given at the global level to delineate issues which call for a global consensus from those which call for regional action.

I. GLOBAL PROGRAMMES

A. International Conference on Population and Development

6. At the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), held in Cairo in September 1994, a two-member ECE delegation headed by the Executive Secretary addressed the plenary, placing emphasis on population trends and issues in Europe and North America and public policy responses to current and future population developments. The following major themes, which are relevant for the region, were covered in the presentation: (a) sub-replacement fertility, family change and contraception; (b) population ageing, older people and health; (c) international migration and foreign population; and (d) assistance to countries with economies in transition.

7. During the Conference, the Executive Secretary had a number of meetings, including one with representatives of countries in transition and one with representatives of OECD countries. The two meetings considered, respectively, how countries in transition could be assisted by ECE and other regional and international organizations with the follow-up to the Conference and how the donor countries might wish to plan for future cooperation with countries in transition. A meeting was also held with representatives of the Council of Europe to discuss future coordination of follow-up activities to be supported by the two organizations.

8. Prior to the Cairo Conference the ECE Population Activities Unit attended the Consultative Meeting of Countries with Economies in Transition on the International Conference on Population and Development (Budapest, 19-20 July 1994), which was convened by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and hosted by the Government of Hungary. The Meeting invited UNFPA and ECE to collaborate actively with the delegations of countries in transition during the Cairo Conference and assist them in ways deemed appropriate by the delegations. The Population Activities Unit helped the coordinator of the delegations of countries in transition draft a document entitled "Immediate follow-up to the ICPD in countries with economies in transition: October 1994 - March 1995". The document was considered and adopted by the representatives of countries in transition on the last day of the Conference.

9. The regional commissions have been invited by the ICPD Programme of Action to participate actively, within their mandates, in the follow-up to the Conference at the regional level. In addition, the Programme of Action called on the international community to provide countries in transition with assistance to their population and development activities in view of the difficult economic and social conditions they currently face. In response to these recommendations ECE has prepared a document "Population trends and population-related issues in countries in transition: the need for international assistance", which is currently being reviewed by some 40 population experts in the region before being finalized. In addition, ECE has appointed a regional adviser for population and development for a six-month period who will assist with the implementation of the transition countries' immediate post-Cairo follow-up plan.

10. ECE also coordinated the formulation of a joint response from the regional commissions to the Director of the Population Division, Department for Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis (DESIPA), on the role of the United Nations Population Commission in the implementation of the Programme of Action. The regional commissions were of the view that the implementation should be coordinated (a) by the Population Commission, which should be strengthened accordingly, and (b) with the implementation of the final documents of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), the World Summit for Social Development and the Fourth World Conference on Women.

B. World Summit for Social Development

11. The General Assembly, in resolution 47/92, requested the regional commissions to contribute to the World Summit for Social Development by emphasizing the social situation in their respective regions. The joint contribution of all five regional commissions covering the major thematic clusters of the Summit i.e. poverty, employment and social integration, was submitted to the first session of the Preparatory Committee for the Summit. The ECE contribution centred on the labour market, labour-related relative poverty and population trends, with the emphasis on social integration of vulnerable population groups, particularly the ageing, migrants and disabled persons.

12. The regional commissions, including ECE, monitored closely the preparatory process in order to make sure that problems identified within each region, as well as the role of the regional commissions, are reflected in the draft Declaration and draft Programme of Action being considered by the Preparatory Committee for the World Summit for Social Development. The ECE concern was to emphasize the interrelationship between major economic and social issues and to seek support for countries with economies in transition which are undergoing fundamental political, economic and social transformations, and therefore require the support of the international community.

13. ECE has also contributed to the interagency report on poverty prepared by the Consultative Committee on Programme and Operational Questions (CCPOQ) which will be circulated for information during the Summit.

14. The ECE publication on Rehabilitation Engineering (ECE/ENG.AUT/55, sales No.94.II.E.17), one of ECE's contributions to the Summit, will be exhibited at

the NGO Forum 95 since the United Nations is not organizing a special exhibit of the publications prepared for the Summit.

15. Taking into account the new population trends and representing the only region with a predominant ageing population, ECE contributed to the preparatory process by convening the Workshop on Population Ageing in Europe and North America: a Message to the World Summit for Social Development, at Geneva on 13 and 14 February 1995.

16. The Workshop was organized jointly by ECE and the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP), with financial support from UNFPA. The other United Nations bodies and agencies, in particular the World Health Organization (WHO), contributed to the Workshop.

17. The purpose of the Workshop was to consider policy responses to population ageing in Europe and North America. Particular emphasis was placed on the main themes of the World Summit - poverty, employment and social integration. Figuring prominently on the agenda were an analysis of current and future trends in population ageing in the ECE region, including the subregional variations, public and private responses related to the problem, income security schemes and participation of older persons in the economy and in society. The report and messages emanating from the Workshop will be widely circulated during the Social Summit.

18. ECE will be represented at the Summit in Copenhagen from 6 to 12 March 1995. The conference will provide an opportunity to present the relevant work of ECE and to explore possible ways and means to contribute concretely to the follow-up activities envisaged by the United Nations system, particularly in the field of population and statistics, as well as to secure interface between economic and social issues.

19. ECE will also participate in the NGO Forum and will make a presentation at the workshop organized by the International Council of Social Welfare (ICSW) on the current macroeconomic trends within the ECE region and possible scenarios for the future, population trends, and the major recommendations emanating from the ECE High-level Regional Preparatory Meeting for the Fourth World Conference on Women. The presentation will focus on the relationship between economic and social development in central and eastern Europe and the role of NGOs.

C. Fourth World Conference on Women

20. The ECE High-level Regional Preparatory Meeting for the Fourth World Conference on Women took place at Vienna from 17 to 21 October 1994. It was the first intergovernmental meeting on women ever held at a high-level in the region covered by the Economic Commission for Europe. More than 1,200 people participated as follows: ECE member States: 348 participants, representing 45 countries; 26 participants, representing 11 observer States; 85 participants, representing 25 bodies and specialized agencies of the United Nations; 38 participants, representing 8 international organizations; 272 participants representing 75 NGOs with consultative status and 485 participants representing 224 NGOs without consultative status.

21. The Meeting was chaired by Ms. J. Dohnal, Austrian Minister for Women's Affairs. The Vice-Chairpersons of the Meeting were: Ms. Miet Smet, Minister

of Employment and Labour of Belgium; Ms. Elisabeth Rehn, Minister for Defence and for Equality Affairs of Finland; Ms. Sheila Finestone, Secretary of State for the Status of Women of Canada, Ms. Hildegard Puwak, State Secretary at the Council for Coordination, Strategy and Economic Reform of Romania; and Mr. A.M. Panov, Deputy Minister for Social Protect of Population of the Russian Federation. Mr. Ireneusz Matela (Poland) was Rapporteur. Ms. Irene Freudenschuss-Reichl, Austria, was Moderator of the Open-ended Drafting Group that negotiated the Platform for Action.

22. The Meeting was addressed by 21 government ministers and other eminent persons heading their respective delegation. Ms. G. Mongella, Secretary-General of the Fourth World Conference on Women, made a statement at the opening session of the Meeting, and Queen Fabiola of Belgium, member of the Advisory Council established by the Secretary General for the Conference, addressed the Meeting as a Special Guest.

23. The Meeting had before it six substantive reports prepared by the ECE secretariat, namely: Review and appraisal of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies on Equality, Development and Peace (E/ECE/RW/HLM/1); Trends in women's role in the economy (E/ECE/RW/HlM/2); Demographic and statistical trends and issues (E/ECE/RW/HLM/3); Women's access to employment and entrepreneurship (E/ECE/RW/HLM/4); Role of women in the transition processes (E/ECE/RW/HLM/5); and Women in public life and governance (E/ECE/RW/HLM/6).

24. A draft of the Platform for Action was also before the Conference. On the basis of a preliminary version prepared by the secretariat, the draft was further elaborated during an expert group meeting which took place at Geneva on 23 and 24 June 1994 and, subsequently, negotiations were initiated during an intergovernmental meeting which was held at Geneva on 26-27 September 1994.

25. More than 1,700 participants took part in a regional Non-Governmental Forum organized by the ECE/NGO Working Group and held from 13-15 October at the Vienna International Centre and other locations in Vienna. The Forum's conclusions were presented at the opening session of the Meeting by the President of the ECE/NGO Working Group, and a report was issued during the Meeting. Furthermore, the Secretariat of the Fourth World Conference on Women organized a Youth Consultation which took place from 13 to 16 October, gathering together 20 NGOs.

26. Of the 25 United Nations bodies and specialized agencies participating in the Meeting, 15 made statements under agenda items falling within their respective sphere of competence. Four of them organized events for the press, NGOs or delegations during the Meeting.

27. Many of the participating agencies are launching new programmes for the advancement of women in countries in transition. All of them are committed to the preparatory process for Beijing as well as playing a role in implementing the recommendations to be adopted there.

28. The draft Platform for Action was negotiated in an open-ended drafting group, which held sessions in parallel to the plenary sessions. The text was adopted by consensus at the final session of the Meeting.

29. The document contains a Preambular Declaration, a statement of mission and describes the regional framework of action. Subsequently, it outlines

seven "critical areas of concern", which are matched by seven strategic objectives contained in part IV, which constitutes the action-oriented part of the document. The strategic objectives relate to achieving and protecting the full realization of all women's human rights; eradication of women's poverty; recognition of women's full contribution to their national economies and to sustainable development; equal treatment between women and men workers and the harmonization of work and family responsibilities; full participation of women in public life; gender specific statistical systems and gender research and intra- and interregional solidarity and cooperation for the empowerment of women.

30. Part V of the document deals with the means of implementation and follow-up and contains a section on "The regional role of the United Nations system". It underlines that the system should play a significant role in the implementation and monitoring of the strategic objectives, in close cooperation with other global and regional organizations. This should be done by organizing debates and exchange of experiences on specific aspects of such objectives and by adopting an integrated approach, preferably through joint programming of specific activities. Accordingly, the document delineates five areas for the follow-up to the Regional Platform for Action by the United Nations system, focusing on: (a) intergovernmental policy debates; (b) action by the regional Offices of the specialized United Nations bodies and agencies; (c) the role of ECE; (d) technical assistance and operational activities; (e) the interface between NGOs, the United Nations system and Governments in countries in transition.

31. In order to play its role in the implementation of, and follow-up to, the regional Platform for Action, ECE is requested to mainstream women's issues and gender perspective within its existing mandate and activities, inter alia, statistics and economic analysis. The establishment of mechanisms and processes to ensure such implementation and follow-up could lead to the preparation of an Action Plan to be prepared immediately after the Fourth World Conference at Beijing in consultation with other institutions active in the region. The Action Plan could be implemented during the 1996-1997 biennium.

32. It should be recalled that, since the Commission had not dealt with women-related issues in the past, the secretariat had to rely on external funding and outside expertise to prepare the High-level Regional Preparatory Meeting.

33. Part VI of the document concerns the mobilization of financial resources for implementing the strategic objectives. It proposes, inter alia, to establish goals for resource mobilization, focusing on the fundamental elements of what might constitute an effective core programme for women's advancement, while in no way undermining the importance of mainstreaming women-related issues. In this respect, the Meeting requests that "this issue be put on the agenda of the March 1995 session of the Commission on the Status of Women, and urges the General Assembly to request that, within existing resources, the Secretary-General's report to that session on the state of the art in this field and on the feasibility of convening an Expert Group Meeting on this issue, consisting of government and other experts and relevant United Nations agencies".

34. At present, the secretariat is ensuring the immediate follow-up to the Meeting in response to requests. It stands ready to ensure a follow-up on a more permanent basis as long as the necessary means and appropriate mechanisms are provided.

35. The Platform for Action adopted at Vienna has enabled the Commission to continue its contribution to the preparatory process for the Fourth World Conference in cooperation with member States, the Commission for the Status of Women, the Council of Europe and the NGO community.

D. United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II)

36. The ECE Regional Preparatory Meeting for the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) (Istanbul, 13-14 June 1996) was held at Geneva on 12 September 1994. The Meeting considered the ECE contribution to the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements and reviewed the draft paper "Towards sustainable human settlements development in the ECE region", which had been prepared by Mr. M. Lujanen (Finland) at the request of the Bureau of the ECE Committee on Human Settlements.

37. The Meeting concluded that the ECE contribution to Habitat II should make full use of the work and capacity of its different relevant subsidiary bodies. The Meeting further recommended that a coordination group should be established within the secretariat to provide a cross-sectoral review of the ECE contribution to the Conference in general and the document "Towards sustainable human settlements development in the ECE region" in particular. The coordinating group had its first meeting on 2 February 1995.

38. The Committee on Human Settlements agreed to establish a Task Force to assist the Committee in carrying out the preparatory work. The Committee's Bureau at its meeting in December 1995 agreed on the terms of reference of the Task Force and nominated Mr. L. Karlsberg (Sweden) a Chairman of the Task Force. A workshop to define the scope of activities of the Task Force will be held in Istanbul (Turkey) from 9 to 10 March 1995.

39. As requested by the Commission in decision I (49) related to ECE preparations for Habitat II, a separate document has been submitted to the Commission (E/ECE/1318).

E. ECE contribution to the functional commissions and expert meetings of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)

40. ECE intensified its cooperation with the functional commissions and expert meetings of ECOSOC, such as the Commission on Sustainable Development, Statistical Commission, Population Commission, Commission on Science and Technology for Development, Commission on the Status of Women, Commission for Social Development, Expert Meeting on New and Renewable Sources of Energy and many other United Nations intergovernmental bodies.

41. Thus, for example, the documentation and recommendations for action prepared by the secretariat for the preparatory process of the third session of the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) included such issues as combating poverty; changing consumption patterns; information for decision making, integrating environment and development in decision making; the role of major groups; demographic dynamics; consultative mechanisms on

information exchange systems; transfer of technology, cooperation and capacity building; biotechnology; agriculture and rural development; and international legal instruments and mechanisms.

42. With these contributions, it is expected that the third session of CSD would give further momentum to the promotion of regional cooperation for capacity building, the integration of environmental concerns into development policies, and transboundary issues related to sustainable development.

43. Similar efforts were made to increase the ECE contribution to the related meetings of the United Nations and specialized agencies. It is expected that the additional efforts to present ECE activities through reporting will strengthen the outreach of ECE work results and lead to further cooperative arrangements, including joint programming of assistance to economies in transition.

II. ASSISTANCE TO DEVELOPING COUNTRIES OF OTHER REGIONS

44. The consultative process with other regional commissions, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Department for Development Services and Management Support (DDSMS) has been continued in order to identify resources for translating some of the ECE ongoing programmes into assistance to developing countries of other regions.

A. Trade Facilitation

45. The ECE Working Party on Facilitation of International Trade Procedures has over the years developed into a unique forum for international cooperation in trade facilitation. In particular, it provides a platform for interregional discussions on the matter. Representatives from more than 40 countries participate in the sessions of the Working Party. In order better to coordinate activities on the development and implementation of UN/EDIFACT the Working Party has appointed regional EDIFACT rapporteurs for Pan America, Western Europe, Eastern Europe, Australia/New Zealand, Africa and Asia. The rapporteurs have in turn established regional EDIFACT boards to support their work.

46. The fact that out of six regional EDIFACT boards, three are established in countries outside the ECE region (Asian EDIFACT Board, African EDIFACT Board and Australia/New Zealand EDIFACT Board), and that one includes non-ECE as well as ECE member countries (Pan American EDIFACT Board), emphasizes the importance of these regions in the collaborative effort to develop UN/EDIFACT and modern trade facilitation techniques. Regions outside Europe comprise the following countries:

(a) Asian EDIFACT Board: China, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand. The Taiwan Province of China is an associate member of the Board, while Mongolia and Hong Kong are observers;

(b) African EDIFACT Board: Botswana, Gabon, Morocco, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe;

(c) Australia/New Zealand EDIFACT Board: Australia and New Zealand;

(d) Pan American EDIFACT Board: Brazil, Canada, Chile and the United States. Colombia participates as an associate member.

47. Participation in the activities of the regional EDIFACT boards, which contribute to the development of UN/EDIFACT standards between sessions, has expanded considerably. The global nature of the work has been recognized by the Bureau of the Working Party, and in order better to represent the interests of those countries that are not members of ECE, the Bureau has appointed a special representative (Japan).

48. A member of the secretariat participated in the Asian EDIFACT Board Meeting in Malaysia in June 1994 and was able to advise Governments on trade facilitation recommendations. In addition, the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) is pursuing an active trade facilitation programme in the Asian region.

49. Close cooperation has been maintained between ECE and UNCTAD since the creation of FALPRO (Special Programme on Trade Facilitation), now called SPTE (Special Programme on Trade Efficiency), allowing the two organizations to benefit from their combined resources. The results of ECE work are disseminated in developing countries that are not members of ECE through technical cooperation activities. One event of particular importance was the United Nations World Summit on Trade Efficiency, held at Columbus, Ohio, in October 1994. Representatives from ECE attended the symposium and one horizontal and one vertical session dealing with trade facilitation were held. In a cooperative effort with UNCTAD/SPTE, a Compendium on Trade Facilitation Recommendations was developed.

B. Statistics

50. Indirectly, ECE work in statistics contributes to the statistical work of other regional commissions. A case in point is the ECE decision on the fundamental principles of official statistics, which were widely discussed and commented in all regions. They have now been adopted by the United Nations Statistical Commission.

51. In the field of statistics, ECE continues to provide assistance to developing countries through the transfer of results and know-how of the joint ECE/UNDP Statistical Computing Project Phase 2 (SCP-2). SCP 2 final products are disseminated to the other regional commissions and developing countries in all regions of the world.

52. In its review of the international statistical system, the United Nations Statistical Commission has drawn heavily upon work already undertaken in the ECE region and in particular by the Conference of European Statisticians (CES).

53. In order better to coordinate the work of international agencies in statistics, the Statistical Commission is considering adopting the CES procedure for the integrated presentation of statistical work programmes of all international organizations active in the region. Experience in the ECE region indicates that greater efficiency can be achieved and duplication eliminated by the procedures adopted by ECE.

54. The Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics, which were adopted by the Economic Commission for Europe have been accepted by the United Nations Statistical Commission and distributed to all regions of the world.

C. Environment

55. Agenda 21 and other decisions adopted at UNCED expressed the need to develop a more systematic approach in exchanging experience and technical know-how among countries and regions. The pioneering work of ECE and its conventions provide concepts and approaches that could be of assistance to other regions through increased interaction with the Commission for Sustainable Development to which regional plans for action are being submitted. The representatives of developing and donor countries have shown interest in the Environment for Europe process and its ministerial conferences.

56. An example of quite concrete action is the cooperation with the International Centre for Public Enterprises (ICPE) to formulate an initial programme on integrated coastal management in the Mediterranean region.

D. Energy

57. The experience of the ECE programme on Energy Efficiency 2000 resulted in the proposal to extend the work to other regions according to the preliminary proposal elaborated by ECE under the title Global Energy Efficiency 21, which was formally reviewed by ECA, ESCAP and ESCWA. All the regional commissions are supposed to develop joint programmes in the field of natural resources and energy with DDSMS. The ECE Committee on Energy at its fourth session reiterated its request to convene the Steering Committee of the Global Energy Efficiency 21 in cooperation with DDSMS so as to develop a comprehensive programme with all necessary regional modifications, which could be submitted for funding to bilateral and multilateral financial institutions. Consultations are in progress with DDSMS to secure the programme support costs for convening the Steering Committee and further develop the programmes.

58. Similar consultations are carried out to secure exchange of experience and develop interregional cooperation in the field of energy resources such as coal, natural gas and renewable sources of energy.

E. Transport

59. Most legal instruments on transport promoted by ECE are open to accession by United Nations Member States. They refer to transport infrastructure, facilitation of transport operations and transport regulations in inland transport. Three worldwide conventions have contributed to the application of a common system of road signs, signals and markings, safety requirements for motor vehicles and improvement of road traffic safety. ECE supports the work of ECOSOC related to the transport of dangerous goods, which enables countries of other regions to develop national legislation and regional agreements.

60. Advisory services were provided to the ECO/ESCAP subregional Seminar on Transport Facilitation measures, held at Teheran from 15 to 17 November 1994 for ECO member states namely Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

F. Industry

61. Many of the studies made in the industry and technology field, such as the "Global Review of the Iron and Steel Industry" and the study of chemical legislation in the countries of the ECE region, address questions of interest also to developing countries. The recommendation on metrology in testing, adopted by the Commission at its forty-ninth session in 1994 as decision H (49), provides information about state of the art practices and procedures which if adhered to will facilitate exports from developing countries to the ECE region. The recently issued publication "ECE Inventory of Safety Guidelines in Biotechnology" contains information of interest to those developing countries which conduct research, development and production activities in the field of biotechnology as well as export and/or import products produced with the use of biotechnological methods.

G. Agriculture and Timber

62. ECE cooperates with the FAO/WHO Codex Alimentarius Commission through its Working Party on Standardization of Perishable Produce and Quality Development. In addition, for countries which comply with ECE standards, it facilitates access of their products on ECE markets. The results of the work of the Timber Committee are used by the FAO European Forestry Commission. The criteria on sustainable forest management are most relevant for international trade in timber. The activities of the joint FAO/ECE/ILO Committee on forest technology made it possible to make available the experience of developed countries to experts in other regions.